



Rubric for Scoring Distinguished Elementary School Applications

SCALE: The scoring rubric provides a comprehensive set of quality statements that reflect a consensus of the education community about the elements that should be present in an exemplary elementary school. Individual schools may use the rubric for self-assessment. The rubric will be used to evaluate 2000 Distinguished Elementary School applications based on a four-point scale (4 signifies high quality). Each rubric level is designed to be a holistic description, not a checklist. Evaluators will assign the score that *most closely resembles* the information provided in the application. Schools selected for recognition typically receive scores of 3 or 4. To receive those scores, schools must provide specific examples and other evidence in their responses. Applicants are not expected to receive scores of level 4 in all areas. In some instances, level 4 describes an ideal toward which schools are encouraged to strive.

1 STANDARDS, ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY: VISION AND STANDARDS Describe the process used by your *school community*¹ to establish and communicate a common vision of what students should know, understand, and be able to do upon leaving elementary school. Indicate the roles played by members of your school community. Describe how the school and district have developed rigorous content and performance standards and are implementing them. Describe how you ensure that local standards are at least as rigorous as state standards. Describe how the school and district examine and use student assessment results to ensure progress toward achievement of standards. Discuss how you plan and set annual goals to improve or adjust school programs to help all students achieve standards. Explain how student assessment results and school information are communicated to the community. **Note: This section will be weighted twofold in the application scoring process.**

(4) Makes a Strong Case	(3) Makes an Adequate Case	(2) Makes a Limited Case	(1) Makes a Minimal Case
Representatives of all segments of the school community collaborate to establish a clear vision of what all students should know, understand, and be able to do upon leaving the school. The representatives and the vision reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity of the community. The vision reflects current research and practice, and includes expectations that promote positive character traits in students. The vision statement is communicated to the school community and is periodically updated.	Staff, the site council, and selected parents and community members establish a clear vision of what all students should know, understand, and be able to do. It reflects current research and practice, and it acknowledges the cultural and linguistic diversity of the community and the importance of promoting positive character traits in students. The vision statement is communicated to the school community and is periodically updated.	Administrators and selected staff develop a vision of what students should know, understand, and be able to do. It is generally consistent with the curriculum. This information is communicated to the school community. The vision statement is periodically reviewed.	The school has a formal statement of philosophy and goals on file at the school. They are rarely used in making curricular and staff development decisions, and may not be or reflected in day-to-day operations.
The school has high expectations for all students. Standards for language arts and mathematics have been adopted by the district board and implemented. Standards for other subject areas are in place or in final stages of development. The process used to develop standards is described, including how local standards have been examined to ensure that they are at least as rigorous as state standards.	The school has high expectations for all students. Standards in language arts and math have been adopted. Standards for other subject areas are in final stages of development. The process for developing standards is described, including how local standards have been examined to ensure that they are at least as rigorous as state standards.	The school has high expectations for most students. Standards in language arts and math have been developed. The process used to develop standards is described.	The school has high expectations for some students. Standards in language arts and math are being developed. The development process is unclear.
A comprehensive school plan with annual goals focuses on how the school's programs will be improved or adjusted to help all students achieve standards.	A comprehensive school plan with annual goals focuses on how school programs will be improved or adjusted help all students achieve standards.	There is an annual plan to evaluate school programs. Goals are generally described. It is not clear that the primary focus is helping students achieve standards.	It is not clear if there is an annual plan to evaluate school programs.
Disaggregated student assessment results and the school's progress toward its annual improvement goals are communicated to all segments of the school community in a variety of ways. If there are students with a home language other than English, their families routinely receive information in their primary language(s).	Disaggregated student assessment results and the school's progress toward its annual improvement goals are communicated to the school community in traditional ways. If there are students with a home language other than English, required information is provided to families in their primary language.	There is limited communication with the community regarding student assessment results and school improvement efforts.	Strategies for reporting student assessment results and school improvement efforts to the school community are not discussed.

¹ In all sections of the rubric, *school community* is meant to include *administrators, teachers, other school staff, family members, business partners, community members, and where appropriate, students*. Schools should be able to reference those groups when responding to questions that ask about *school community*. Application evaluators will expect to see them included.

2 STANDARDS, ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY: STUDENT ASSESSMENT Describe how the school and district examine student assessment results at the school and classroom levels to ensure progress in student achievement using examples in language arts and mathematics. Describe your methods of student assessment, how they are aligned with your standards, and how you use disaggregated assessment results to demonstrate how well students are meeting your standards. Show how teachers use assessment information to modify curriculum and instruction to improve student achievement. Describe how students are involved in the analysis of their own work. Describe how the progress of special needs students is assessed including English language learners. ***Local assessment methods may include, but are not limited to writing samples; teacher evaluation of student work (grades, records, checklists, portfolios); district-developed assessments; alternative primary language assessments; criterion-referenced assessments; publishers' norm-referenced tests; and assessments linked to instructional materials. State law mandates state-level assessment using the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) system which includes the Stanford 9th edition, (SAT 9).***

(4) Makes a Strong Case	(3) Makes an Adequate Case	(2) Makes a Limited Case	(1) Makes a Minimal Case
<p>Teachers regularly use a wide range of assessment information to modify curriculum and instruction and to improve student achievement of standards. A local assessment system using multiple measures is in place. Examples in language arts and math demonstrate how the assessment process is used.</p> <p>All teachers meet regularly by grade level to analyze student work in core areas, determine what students know, and decide what their next teaching steps should be. Strategies are in place to ensure that teachers apply consistent criteria in judging student work. All teachers and some members of the school community regularly examine student assessment results and school data. As a team they analyze the data and make decisions about the school, each classroom, and individual students.</p> <p>Students throughout the school are taught how to analyze their own work, and have frequent opportunities to do so. They are able to reflect on their progress, and identify their strengths and weaknesses.</p> <p>All at risk students or those with special needs are assessed appropriately to accurately depict their knowledge and growth. Assessment for English language learners is performed in a way that distinguishes the need for content instruction from poor English skills. Special accommodations or modifications are provided during assessment to ensure that children with disabilities have a fair opportunity to demonstrate what they know and are able to do, including alternative assessments as determined by the Individualized Education Program (IEP).</p>	<p>Teachers use some assessment information to modify curriculum and instruction and to improve student achievement of standards. A local assessment system using multiple measures is in place. Examples in language arts and math demonstrate how the assessment process is used.</p> <p>All teachers meet at least quarterly by grade level to analyze student work in core subject areas. They determine what students know, and decide what their next teaching steps should be. Teachers apply consistent criteria in judging student work. Some teachers and members of the school community analyze assessment information and school data to make decisions about the school, each classroom, and individual students.</p> <p>In some classes students are taught how to analyze their own work. They are able to reflect on their progress, and identify their strengths and weaknesses.</p> <p>All at risk students or those with special needs are assessed appropriately to accurately depict their knowledge and growth.</p>	<p>Teachers use student assessment information to periodically modify curriculum and instruction, but there is no regular process. A local assessment system using multiple measures is being developed.</p> <p>A few teachers meet at least once a year to analyze student work in some areas to determine what students know, and decide what their next teaching steps should be. Little attention is given to ensuring that teachers apply consistent criteria in judging student work. Teachers, as individuals rather than by grade level or as a school team, examine assessment results and other classroom data and make decisions about their classes and students.</p> <p>Students rarely analyze their own work. They mostly rely on their teachers to identify their strengths and weaknesses.</p> <p>There is limited evidence that at risk or special needs students are appropriately assessed.</p>	<p>Student assessment information may be examined, but the analysis does not relate to classroom practices. A local assessment system using multiple measures is being planned.</p> <p>Teachers rely heavily on teacher or text-generated tests and individual work sheets to evaluate students. Teachers may examine individual student assessment results and other data to make decisions.</p> <p>Students do not analyze their own work, and rely on their teachers to identify their strengths and weaknesses.</p> <p>Assessment of at risk or special needs students is not addressed.</p>

3 TEACHING AND LEARNING: CURRICULUM CONTENT AND INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES Describe how the school provides a comprehensive and balanced curriculum in all subject areas that is articulated across grade levels, and articulated with preschool (where possible) and the middle school. Use examples from language arts *or* math to describe how the curriculum is aligned with the district/school content and performance standards. Describe how all students are provided with challenging learning experiences. Describe curriculum development and the selection of instructional materials in the school. Describe the library media services that support the curriculum and learning activities. **Note: This section will be weighted twofold in the application scoring process.**

(4) Makes a Strong Case	(3) Makes an Adequate Case	(2) Makes a Limited Case	(1) Makes a Minimal Case
<p>A comprehensive curriculum is provided to all students across all grade levels in all curriculum areas—language arts, math, science, history/social science, health education, visual and performing arts, physical education², and English Language Development for English Learners. It includes (1) content knowledge, (2) application of basic skills, (3) problem solving, and (4) comprehension. An interdisciplinary approach may be used. Curriculum planning is based on current educational research and knowledge of best practices.</p> <p>The core curriculum is aligned with district/school standards. It is articulated across grade levels, and with preschool (where possible), the middle school, and with after-school programs. Examples are provided in language arts <i>or</i> math to demonstrate alignment and articulation.</p> <p>Curriculum development and the selection of instructional materials involve the entire school community. Curriculum and materials are aligned with standards. Materials reflect current educational research and practice and are evaluated to determine their effectiveness. Community resources are used to enhance the curriculum with real-world experiences.</p> <p>Staff uses a variety of instructional methods and strategies to meet the needs of all students including flexible groupings, hands-on activities, projects, fieldwork, service-learning, and library research. There is a balance between independent and collaborative student work, teacher-directed, and student-centered instruction. Extensions are provided for students who seek additional challenges.</p> <p>Learning activities are supported by a high-quality library media center with a full-time credentialed library media teachers, current technology, and learning resources to meet the diverse needs of students. Some materials reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity of the community. The library media center is available to students and families beyond the school day and is flexibly scheduled.</p>	<p>A comprehensive curriculum in all subjects is provided to all students. It includes (1) content knowledge, (2) application of basic skills, (3) problem solving, and (4) comprehension. Curriculum planning is based on current educational research and knowledge of best practices.</p> <p>The school is in the process of aligning its core curriculum with standards. There is articulation of some core curriculum areas across grade levels, and with preschool (where possible) and middle school. Examples are provided in language arts <i>or</i> math to demonstrate alignment and articulation.</p> <p>School and district staffs develop curriculum and solicit community opinion. There is a plan to align instructional materials with standards. A process for reviewing alignment is clearly described and may be implemented in some areas. A process is being developed to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional materials.</p> <p>A reduced variety of instructional methods are being used in all classrooms and curricular areas. Instructional groupings vary with the nature of the task. Students work in groups and independently. Extensions are provided for students who seek additional challenges.</p> <p>Learning activities are supported by a library media center with a full-time paid library technician, current technology, and a variety of learning resources. The library is open during the normal school day, before and after school, and during lunch.</p>	<p>The application makes general statements that a comprehensive core curriculum is provided to all students in most areas. Curriculum planning is based on knowledge of best practices.</p> <p>Plans have been developed and some efforts have begun to align the curriculum with standards. School staff meet periodically for curriculum articulation across grade levels. There are plans for articulation with preschool and middle school.</p> <p>School and district staff select textbooks and instructional materials. It is not clear whether the instructional materials have been evaluated for effectiveness.</p> <p>Staff relies on textbooks to provide rigor in the curriculum areas. The school is planning strategies that will provide students a greater variety of learning experiences. Learning occurs in large-group, small-group, and individualized instruction.</p> <p>Learning activities are supported by a library media center with part-time paid staff. Some technology and learning resources are available.</p>	<p>It is not clear that a comprehensive curriculum which includes content knowledge, application of basic skills, problem solving, and comprehension is provided for all students.</p> <p>Plans are being discussed to align the curriculum with standards. Articulation of the curriculum across grade levels is not addressed.</p> <p>School staff is involved in the selection of textbooks. The effectiveness of the materials is not addressed.</p> <p>Most learning takes place through whole-group instruction and traditional ability groups. Strategies appear to focus on teacher needs.</p> <p>Learning activities are supported by a library media center kept open by volunteers.</p>

²Education Code §51223 requires elementary schools to provide physical education instruction, exclusive of recess and lunch periods, for at least 200 minutes each 10 school days.

4 TEACHING AND LEARNING: TEACHER PROFESSIONALISM Describe the processes that support teacher professionalism. Describe professional development activities using examples in language arts and mathematics, who participates in them, and how the activities are selected and evaluated. Discuss how new teachers are selected and supported. Describe the opportunities that are available for teachers to collaborate, broaden their knowledge, participate in decision making and share information with preschool and middle school teachers. *Professional development activities should reflect awareness of the California Standards for the Teaching Profession—(1) engaging and supporting all students in learning; (2) effective learning environments; (3) understanding and organizing subject matter; (4) instruction and learning experiences for all children; (5) assessing student learning; and (6) developing as a professional educator. Support for new teachers should reflect awareness of the California Standards for the Quality and Effectiveness of Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Programs—formative assessment of new teachers; individualized induction plans; use of support providers; and a variety of formal training activities. Discussion may also include, but is not limited to, leadership academies; Subject Matter Projects; networks and consortia; professional organizations; the Bilingual Teacher Training Program; and teacher education institutes.*

(4) Makes a Strong Case	(3) Makes an Adequate Case	(2) Makes a Limited Case	(1) Makes a Minimal Case
<p>The primary focus of professional development is preparation of teachers to help students achieve standards. Student assessment results are used to help determine professional development needs each year. Examples are provided.</p> <p>Other professional development activities relate to the state standards for the teaching profession. The district has a comprehensive professional development program which includes plans for individual teachers. The professional development program is evaluated each year.</p> <p>New teachers are carefully selected, assessed, and supported. The process includes formative assessment; an individualized induction plan; assistance from qualified, trained support providers; and a variety of training activities.</p> <p>Teachers are empowered to make decisions about curriculum, instruction, discipline, teacher and program evaluation, school operations, etc. Opportunities are frequently and routinely scheduled for teachers to work and plan collaboratively, share current educational research, examine student work, and reflect on classroom practices. Staff are recognized for making exceptional efforts with students. Evidence is provided that job satisfaction is high.</p> <p>Teachers have regularly scheduled opportunities to articulate with preschool and middle school staff about the children they serve to facilitate positive transitions for students and families.</p> <p>Teachers are encouraged to take advantage of professional development opportunities at the school, district, county, and/or regional level, in alignment with district plans. They are encouraged to expand their roles, grow professionally, and use best practices. They frequently provide staff development for their colleagues. Other school staff members are included in activities as appropriate, and are viewed as an essential part of a team to enable students to succeed.</p>	<p>Professional development includes preparation of teachers to help students achieve standards. Student assessment results are used to help determine staff development needs each year.</p> <p>Other professional development activities relate to the state standards for the teaching profession. The district has a comprehensive professional development program which includes plans for individual teachers.</p> <p>New teachers are carefully selected. There is a comprehensive, structured process for assessing and supporting the development of new teachers.</p> <p>Teachers are empowered to make decisions about curriculum, instruction, discipline, teacher and program evaluation, school operations, etc. There are some opportunities for teachers to work and plan collaboratively, share current educational research, examine student work, and reflect on classroom practices. Staff are recognized for making exceptional efforts with students.</p> <p>Teachers have some opportunities to articulate with preschool and middle school staff about the children they serve to facilitate positive transitions for students and families.</p> <p>Teachers participate in professional development activities at the school, district, county, and/or regional levels. Opportunities are provided at staff meetings for teachers to share what they learned. Other school staff members are included in activities as appropriate. There is recognition that everyone plays a part in student success.</p>	<p>Planning is underway to focus professional development on helping students achieve standards.</p> <p>Other professional development activities may relate to some of the state standards for the teaching profession.</p> <p>Support for new teachers is limited, and may only provide a mentor teacher.</p> <p>A few teachers serve on committees such as the school site council or student study/success team. The school is working to expand teacher involvement in decision-making. There are occasional opportunities for teachers to work and plan collaboratively and to share information.</p> <p>Articulation activities with middle school and/or preschool are being planned.</p> <p>Teachers participate in some professional development activities. Financial support is limited. Opportunities to share information are limited. Other school staff members may be recognized as resources for student learning, but only relative to job title and function.</p>	<p>The professional development program is determined by the interests and needs of individual teachers without a district plan.</p> <p>There is no evidence of awareness of the state standards for the teaching profession.</p> <p>There is no evidence of support for new teachers.</p> <p>The principal makes most of the decisions about the school with suggestions from selected teachers. There is no evidence that teachers work and plan collaboratively or share information.</p> <p>There is no discussion of articulation with the middle school or preschool.</p> <p>Teachers are not encouraged to attend professional development activities. Minimal financial support is provided. School staff members other than teachers are not recognized as contributors to student achievement.</p>

5 TEACHING AND LEARNING: INTEGRATION OF TECHNOLOGY Discuss the overall plan for integrating technology into the total school program, and how the plan is evaluated and updated. Describe how you select, procure and utilize technology. Describe how you collaborate and share resources with family, community, business, and regional networks, etc., to maximize technology integration. Describe the extent of electronic networking infrastructure throughout the site and beyond. Discuss training for effective use of technology in teaching and learning, and the accommodations you have made to ensure appropriate technical assistance on site. Describe how students, teachers, support staff, families, and community members are able to utilize various learning resources. Include examples of usage data (*e.g., the number of computers, frequency of usage, population of users, etc.*)

(4) Makes a Strong Case	(3) Makes an Adequate Case	(2) Makes a Limited Case	(1) Makes a Minimal Case
<p>The district/school has a comprehensive technology plan with a clear vision of the instructional, learning, and administrative advantages that can be provided through technology. Evaluation of effectiveness is built into the planning structure. The plan provides for continuous updating of essential technology. Examples demonstrate that the school has been able to collaborate and share resources with business, industry, community groups, and regional networks to plan for and procure appropriate technology.</p> <p>Technology is selected and used to enhance the quality of education provided for all students, and is integral to all regular, categorical, and special programs. Use of appropriate technology such as computers, telecommunications, and other media enhances teaching, learning, and administration. Technology helps students increase their knowledge and skills, to expand the depth and scope of curriculum, and obtain information outside the classroom. Software is selected on the basis of its proven ability to raise student achievement of specific grade-level standards.</p> <p>Electronic networking between classrooms, the library and beyond is in place or in the final stages of implementation.</p> <p>High-quality training for the effective use of technology in teaching and learning is provided on an ongoing basis. A well-designed system of contacts for technical assistance provides timely help. An on-site lead person has been identified for immediate needs, and the staff has access to appropriate outside assistance as necessary.</p> <p>All students and school personnel have access to an array of information and learning resources. Teachers and students use technology in a variety of learning activities. Usage data reflect use of the Internet, on-line networks, databases, etc., by teachers, families, students, and community members.</p>	<p>The district/school has a technology plan which reflects an understanding of the advantages of using technology for instruction and administration. The school collaborates with business, industry, community groups, regional networks, etc. to plan for and procure appropriate technology.</p> <p>Technology is viewed as appropriate to enhance the quality of education for all students in regular, categorical, and special programs. Teaching, learning, and the administration of school programs are accomplished with appropriate technology. Technology helps students increase their knowledge and skills, and to expand the depth and scope of the curriculum.</p> <p>Planning and implementation of electronic networking at the site and beyond are underway.</p> <p>Training for the effective use of technology in teaching and learning is provided. Staff is available on site for technical assistance. Additional coordinated technology assistance is provided by the district.</p> <p>All students and school personnel have access to an array of information and learning resources through technology. Technology support may be limited to a technology or computer lab that is accessible to students during and after normal school hours.</p>	<p>The district/school has a limited technology plan. Opportunities to obtain funding for technology from outside sources are being explored.</p> <p>Technology is used primarily as a tool to assist teachers in the management of the instructional program. The school is developing a program in which technology will be used to enhance the curriculum.</p> <p>Planning and implementation of electronic networking at the site is underway.</p> <p>Some training for the use of technology is provided. Some technology assistance is provided on site.</p> <p>Technology is available for specific purposes such as word processing or information retrieval. Technology is available for students who are most interested or most in need, but it is less available to average students.</p>	<p>There is no evidence of a technology plan. Funding for technology is minimal. Opportunities to obtain funding from outside sources have not been explored.</p> <p>Technology is used primarily as a record-keeping and data collection tool for teachers. Student access to technology, if any, is limited to beginning computer literacy and/or drill and practice.</p> <p>A plan exists for networking within the site.</p> <p>Technology training is rarely offered. No formal on-site technology assistance is available.</p> <p>Limited access to electronic information and learning resources is available. Learning and information resources are primarily print-based.</p>

6 TEACHING AND LEARNING: AT RISK STUDENTS AND SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS Identify the at risk student and special needs student populations at your school. Describe the learning support services and personalized assistance provided to those groups of students. Describe the programs and strategies used by the school to ensure access to and success in the regular curriculum. Include evidence that the learning support services are showing success. Describe support for school staff to assist students with disabilities to achieve IEP goals, progress in the regular curriculum, and be educated with non-disabled students. *Special needs students and at risk students include gifted and talented students; English language learners; students with disabilities; students not meeting the school's content and performance standards; retained students or students at risk of retention; and students who do not attend school regularly.*

(4) Makes a Strong Case	(3) Makes an Adequate Case	(2) Makes a Limited Case	(1) Makes a Minimal Case
<p>The school takes responsibility for meeting the needs of all students. There is a coordinated process to identify at risk students and students with special needs and to provide assistance. Administrators, teachers, counselors, families, other school staff, and community members act early and work together to determine successful interventions. Strategies such as a student study team (or student success team) and family-school compacts determine how the school, family, and community will help the student succeed. The school utilizes a variety of programs and strategies that foster student resiliency.</p> <p>At risk students and those with special needs are provided access to the core curriculum, and additional learning support services are provided help them meet the same standards as other students. There are specific intervention programs in place that focus on language arts and math.</p> <p>Special education students are transitioned to and supported in mainstream classes, including full inclusion. English language learners are provided access to the regular curriculum and receive effective instruction to acquire English language skills. A high redesignation rate of English language learners demonstrates their success in achieving English proficiency.</p> <p>A variety of learning support services are provided in the regular classroom or in special intervention programs with small-group or individual instructional activities. The support services are well coordinated to effectively use the resources of the school and community. The school provides extended learning activities beyond the typical school day. Supplemental aids and services for students with disabilities are provided according to their IEPs.</p> <p>Students who need health-related, counseling, or other types of interventions are referred, with family approval, to support services that meet their needs. Where possible, services are coordinated with the school site.</p>	<p>The school uses its resources and those of families and the community to assist at risk students and those with special needs. Responsibilities may not be clearly defined. The school staff works with families to identify successful interventions. Strategies such as a student study team (or student success team) and family-school compacts determine how the school and family will help the student succeed. The school has some strategies in place that foster student resiliency.</p> <p>At risk students and special needs students are provided access to the core curriculum, and additional learning support services are provided to help them meet standards. There are specific intervention programs in place that focus on language arts and math.</p> <p>Information is provided on how special education students are successfully transitioned into mainstream classes. English language learners are provided access to the regular curriculum, and receive instruction to acquire English language skills.</p> <p>A variety of learning support services are provided in the regular classroom or in special intervention programs with small-group or individual instructional activities. It may not be clear how the support services are coordinated with one another at the school site.</p> <p>Students who need health-related, counseling, or other types of interventions are referred, with family approval, to support service providers that meet their needs.</p>	<p>The school takes some responsibility for meeting the needs of at risk students or students with special needs. Individual teachers develop plans to help students succeed. Efforts are made by some staff to foster student resiliency.</p> <p>Discussion of at risk students or special needs students indicate that they may not receive a balanced core curriculum, and may not be encouraged to meet the same standards as other students.</p> <p>There are general statements that special education students are being mainstreamed. It is not clear that English language learners are supported in acquiring English language skills.</p> <p>Support services are often provided by traditional categorical program pull-out strategies with little collaboration between resource staff and classroom teachers.</p> <p>Families may be informed that their students need health-related or other interventions, but they receive limited assistance in locating them.</p>	<p>It is not clear whether anyone at the school takes responsibility for helping at risk or special needs students to succeed. There is no mention of any specific program or strategy that fosters student resiliency.</p> <p>There is no evidence that students who are at risk or have special needs are provided with balanced instruction in the core curriculum.</p> <p>Although school demographics indicate the presence of English language learners, there is no discussion of English language acquisition. If there are special education students, there is no indication that they are being mainstreamed.</p> <p>There is minimal evidence of student learning support services or appropriate interventions. There are no alternatives to large group instruction.</p> <p>There is no evidence that the school takes responsibility for informing families about or referring students for health-related or other interventions where needed.</p>

7 SUPPORT FOR STUDENT LEARNING: SAFE AND HEALTHY SCHOOLS AND COORDINATED SERVICES Describe strategies to ensure a safe, clean, and secure learning environment that reflects the importance of education in our society. Describe programs and strategies to ensure that the school is free from drugs, alcohol, tobacco, crime, and violence. Describe programs and strategies to promote healthy student behaviors and positive character traits. Discuss standards for student behavior and strategies for conflict resolution. Describe how indicators of success for school environment factors are measured. Discuss how the school supports the coordination of health, social, and law enforcement services for students and families in the community. Provide evidence of success (e.g., examples, statistics) in these areas. Describe the school's physical environment.

(4) Makes a Strong Case	(3) Makes an Adequate Case	(2) Makes a Limited Case	(1) Makes a Minimal Case
<p>There is a school-wide focus on the safety, health, and well-being of students. Research-based programs promote violence prevention as well as healthy behaviors in the areas of nutrition and physical activity, and drug, alcohol, and tobacco use prevention. There is a comprehensive Safe School Plan, and evidence of success is demonstrated in an annual research-based assessment of school environment factors (e.g., <i>Safe School Assessment report</i>, <i>Healthy Kids Survey</i>).</p> <p>Expectations for behavior at the school and in the community are well known and accepted by students. School policies and classroom instruction promote social development and group responsibility. The staff promotes and models fairness, equity, and respect for others. Opportunities are provided for students to contribute in meaningful ways to the school, to others, and the community. There are programs to help students learn to deal with conflict in a nonviolent manner (e.g., <i>conflict resolution</i>, <i>mentoring</i>, and <i>peer mediation</i>).</p> <p>The school has well-established partnerships with health, mental health, social service, recreation and employment development providers and collaborates with local law enforcement agencies to coordinate services to students and their families. The support system is well coordinated, accessible, and affordable.</p> <p>The physical environment of the school reflects the importance of education in society. District resources and those from the community are provided to ensure that the buildings and grounds are clean and in good repair. School and classroom environments are stimulating, educationally appropriate (especially in terms of classroom size) and reflect pride in school and student work.</p>	<p>There is a school-wide focus on the safety, health, and well-being of students. Research-based programs promote students' healthy behaviors in areas required by law. The school has a comprehensive Safe School Plan, and evidence of success is described.</p> <p>Expectations for behavior at the school and in the community are communicated as needed. School policies and classroom instruction promote social development and group responsibility. The staff promotes and models fairness, equity, and respect for others. Opportunities are provided for students to contribute in meaningful ways to the school and to others. There are programs to help students deal with conflict in a nonviolent manner.</p> <p>The school works closely with some health, mental health, and social service providers and collaborates with law enforcement agencies to provide services to students and families.</p> <p>School repairs and maintenance are completed as resources permit, but efforts may not be proactive or ongoing in nature. School and classroom environments are stimulating, educationally appropriate (especially in terms of classroom size) and reflect pride in school and student work.</p>	<p>Policies and procedures to ensure a secure environment and student well-being are described. Students, families, and school staff believe the school is safe and secure. The school has programs to promote students' healthy behaviors.</p> <p>Expectations for behavior are not clearly specified. There are some notable efforts by individual teachers and staff to promote social development, group responsibility, fairness, equity, and respect for others. The value of helping students learn to deal with conflict is discussed, but there are no formal programs in place.</p> <p>The school is developing a process for coordinating health, mental health, and social services for students and families. There is limited collaboration with law enforcement agencies.</p> <p>The school community is exploring various resources for making needed repairs or enhancing the facilities or campus. The condition of the campus and classrooms does not meet the standards of cleanliness, educational appropriateness, and school pride that would be expected for an exemplary school.</p>	<p>There are general statements about the safety, health, and well-being of students.</p> <p>There is minimal discussion of expectations for student behavior. There is no evidence of efforts to promote social development, group responsibility, fairness, equity, or respect for others. Conflict resolution issues are not addressed.</p> <p>The school may refer students and families to health, mental health, and social services providers as needed, but takes no responsibility for helping them secure services. There is no evidence of collaboration with law enforcement agencies.</p> <p>There is no evidence that the school community has explored resources to make needed repairs, for providing an adequate number of classrooms or appropriate classroom size, or for enhancing the facilities or campus. The campus and classrooms show evidence of graffiti, disrepair, neglect, and/or lack of school pride.</p>

8 PARTNERSHIPS AMONG FAMILIES, SCHOOLS, AND COMMUNITIES: FAMILY INVOLVEMENT Describe the strategies and activities used to ensure that families—which may include parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, foster parents, stepparents, guardians, or other caregivers—are collaborative partners in the education of their children. Describe how members of the school community are prepared to work together for the benefit of the children. Describe how the school communicates with families and encourages communication from them, including those who are not fluent in English if there are other language groups in the community. If the community is culturally diverse, discuss how the diversity of students’ families is acknowledged. *Discussion may include, but is not limited to, strategies and activities that you use to support families in their roles as leaders and decision makers in school programs and policies; as teachers and supporters of their children’s learning; as communicators between the home and the school about their children’s progress; and as informed consumers of the educational and support services provided by the school and the broader community.*

(4) Makes a Strong Case	(3) Makes an Adequate Case	(2) Makes a Limited Case	(1) Makes a Minimal Case
<p>The school has a comprehensive understanding of the community it serves. As part of an overall plan for effective collaboration, families, administrators, teachers, and community members are trained to work cooperatively to assist students in achieving standards.</p> <p>Families and community members are offered a variety of options for contributing to the success of students and the school. They are viewed as critical members of the school leadership team and participate in determining a common vision for the school. Many routinely participate in the daily life of the school.</p> <p>The school employs a variety of strategies beyond traditional methods to promote communication to and from families (<i>e.g., Web page, e-mail, town hall meetings, forums, etc.</i>) They are informed about school issues as well as community services and resources. Families and their students are assisted during transitions from preschool to elementary school and from elementary school to middle school to ensure that those transitions are successful.</p> <p>Families are helped to support student learning through strategies such as family-school compacts; programs about curriculum and assessment; on-site parent centers; extended-day and enrichment programs; use of library media resources; tutorial programs, etc. Families are offered parenting and adult education classes to support their children’s development. The school facilities are available after regular school hours.</p> <p>The cultural diversity of students’ families is valued throughout the school, as demonstrated in school and community activities, curriculum enhancements, library media materials, etc. Communication is conducted with families in their home language(s).</p>	<p>The school makes an effort to know the community it serves. Many independent connections and activities involve families and the community, but there may not be an ongoing, systematic approach to use those resources. Teachers are trained to work effectively with families to support student learning.</p> <p>The principal and selected faculty members invite families and community members to discuss specific issues as they arise. Some family members regularly volunteer at the school and serve on committees that provide resources and support for both academic and nonacademic issues.</p> <p>The school regularly communicates with families about its programs, policies, events, procedures, and deadlines in traditional ways such as newsletters, bulletins, local media, etc. Efforts are made to facilitate communication to and from the home about a child’s needs, schoolwide student needs, or other issues.</p> <p>The school uses a variety of strategies to help parents support student learning and to inform them about curriculum and assessment. Parenting and adult education classes are occasionally offered.</p> <p>Some evidence is provided that the cultural diversity of students’ families is valued throughout the school. Communication is conducted in their families’ home language(s).</p>	<p>The school uses the skills and talents of family members who offer to participate, but there is no systemic plan for outreach to expand family involvement at the school.</p> <p>Families participate in social and extracurricular activities and booster clubs that support those activities. Family members occasionally serve in advisory roles to offer opinions on policy decisions.</p> <p>The school periodically informs families about programs, policies, events, procedures, and deadlines. Communication is primarily from the school to the home, although the school responds to inquiries.</p> <p>Families receive information about supporting student learning through parent-family/teacher conferences, report card comments, and newsletters.</p> <p>The cultural diversity of students’ families is generally acknowledged and respected. Communication with families is occasionally conducted in their home language(s).</p>	<p>Families typically are involved only in traditional activities such as fund-raising and driving on field trips, rather than as a primary resource for students’ academic success.</p> <p>Few social and extracurricular activities and booster clubs exist. Often the same families are the only ones actively involved. Families are not encouraged to play a role in academic or policy decisions.</p> <p>Communication between the school and families appears to be limited and generally one-way.</p> <p>There is no evidence that families are given assistance in supporting student learning.</p> <p>Although demographics indicate cultural diversity in students’ families, it is not acknowledged by the school. The issue of home language communication is not addressed.</p>

9 PARTNERSHIPS AMONG FAMILIES, SCHOOLS, AND COMMUNITIES: COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS Describe the school-community partnerships that support student learning, strengthen curriculum, and expand student learning experiences. Discuss the relationships the school has developed with other schools and in the surrounding community. Describe the effects that these relationships have on students and the school. Discuss opportunities provided for students to learn about careers and to understand the connection between school and careers. Describe the school's efforts to engage the interest of the non-parent community, i.e., those who do not have children in the school, and involve them in school activities. *The "surrounding community" may include, but is not limited to, other elementary, middle, and/or high schools; community agencies; law enforcement; service and fraternal organizations; associations and clubs; businesses and industries; government agencies (eg., state and federal forestry, wildlife, and agricultural agencies, National Weather Service, etc.); churches; colleges and universities; and other entities unique to the area.*

(4) Makes a Strong Case	(3) Makes an Adequate Case	(2) Makes a Limited Case	(1) Makes a Minimal Case
<p>The school has a wide variety of well-established collaborative partnerships. These relationships not only provide monetary or material support to the school, but also to strengthen curriculum, expand student learning experiences, and provide opportunities for students to contribute to their community. Examples clearly demonstrate that the school-community partnerships have had a positive impact on student learning.</p>	<p>The school has some school-community partnerships. In addition to providing monetary or material support to the school, one or more of the partnerships expand student learning experiences and opportunities for students to contribute to their community. There are general statements that the partnerships have had a positive impact on student learning.</p>	<p>The school may have a few school-community partnerships and is developing others. Theirs primary purpose is to provide monetary or material support to the school.</p>	<p>The school is aware of the potential for school-community partnerships to enhance student learning, and there are plans to establish such partnerships in the future.</p>
<p>The talents and skills of families and other community members are used to enhance curriculum and instruction. Strategies such as projects, fieldwork, service-learning, a school garden, tutoring, mentoring, etc. are used to enhance the curriculum with real-world experiences.</p>	<p>The talents and skills of families and other community members are used to enhance curriculum and instruction. Strategies such as projects, fieldwork, service-learning, a school garden, tutoring, mentoring, etc. are used to enhance the curriculum with real-world experiences.</p>	<p>Some efforts are made to use the talents and skills of families and other community members to enhance the curriculum with real-world experiences, and there are plans for others.</p>	<p>There is minimal evidence that the school is providing opportunities to extend learning outside the classroom.</p>
<p>The school regularly provides a variety of opportunities for students to observe different careers in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors, and the variety of people working in those careers. The school makes an effort to develop student awareness of the connection between school and careers.</p>	<p>The school provides some opportunities for students to observe different careers in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors, and the variety of people working in those careers.</p>	<p>Students have limited opportunities to observe different careers and the variety of people working in those careers.</p>	<p>Students have no opportunities to observe different careers or the variety of people working in them.</p>
<p>The school has successful strategies to engage the interest of and involve its non-parent community, and to involve them in school activities. Evidence is provided that the school enjoys a high level of public confidence.</p>	<p>The school has successful strategies to engage the interest of its non-parent community and to involve them in school activities.</p>	<p>The school has some strategies designed to engage the interest of its non-parent community and to present a positive image of the school.</p>	<p>The school is aware of the importance of engaging the non-parent community, and strategies are being developed.</p>

Schools may apply for special honors in the Special Emphasis Area of Arts Education. This section is optional, and will not be included in the overall scoring of the Distinguished School application. Limit the narrative for this section to no more than two (2) pages. Although some arts education items may overlap with other sections of the rubric, discussion of the arts education program should be extended and elaborated upon here. Schools may cross-reference from other discussions to this section, but the Special Emphasis section should be able to stand alone to facilitate expert review. An expert review panel of arts educators will be looking for programs that are comprehensive, standards-based, creative, innovative, and fully implemented so that they may serve as models for other schools. The panel will consider such equity issues as the inclusion of students with disabilities and English language learners. Schools may be selected for special recognition of their arts programs whether or not they are selected as Distinguished Schools.

10 SPECIAL EMPHASIS AREA: ARTS EDUCATION (OPTIONAL) Describe the arts program provided at the school, including levels of instruction at various grade levels. If appropriate, discuss how it is coordinated with other schools in a district-wide program. Provide information about student participation in the program. Discuss how all students are provided the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and learn the skills intrinsic to the arts as well as the inter-relationship of the arts with other academic disciplines. Discuss the ongoing process of evaluating the program and how results are used for program improvement and professional development. Describe specialized instructors, and the professional development provided to them and to regular classroom teachers. Provide information about administrative and financial support for arts education. Discuss the involvement of families in the program. Describe partnerships with the local arts community and learning opportunities for students outside the classroom.

(4) Exemplary	(3) Adequate
<p>The program clearly demonstrates a philosophy that arts education in dance, music, theater, and the visual arts is an essential and integral component of a balanced and sequential educational program at all grade levels. All students have access to the arts program including English language learners and students with disabilities. Evidence demonstrates schoolwide participation among a variety of activities. There are differentiated levels of instruction from basic to advanced and from required to optional instruction. The curriculum is based on the <i>Visual and Performing Arts Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve</i>. The curriculum emphasizes teaching and learning of the knowledge and skills intrinsic to the arts, as well as the interrelationships of the arts with other academic disciplines.</p> <p>High standards are set for student achievement in all of the arts disciplines, with appropriate assessment of student performance and achievement. Student results are used for improvement of instruction and learning. The program is evaluated regularly, and results are used for professional development and program improvement.</p> <p>Instruction covers a range of art forms and disciplines and includes vocal and instrumental music, dance, theater, and the visual arts. It is sequential and balanced between creation, production, and performance in the arts, and historical and cultural context of the arts, artistic perception, and aesthetic valuing.</p> <p>The school and/or district provides high-quality professional development to quality instructors, including arts specialists, artist-teachers, and well-trained classroom teachers. Administrative and financial support for arts education provides for appropriate time, space, equipment, materials, and instructional resources.</p> <p>Families are involved in the arts program in a variety of ways—as volunteers and planning committee members, etc. They receive training as needed. There are strong and vital partnerships with the local arts community. Students have frequent and regularly scheduled opportunities to learn outside of as well as inside the school, including contact with artists, performers, arts institutions and organizations, and works in the arts.</p>	<p>The program demonstrates a philosophy that arts education in dance, music, theater, and the visual arts is an essential and integral component of a balanced educational program. All students have access to the arts program and evidence indicates a high level of participation. The curriculum is based on the <i>Visual and Performing Arts Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve</i>. The curriculum emphasizes teaching and learning of the knowledge and skills intrinsic to the arts, as well as the interrelationships of the arts with other academic disciplines.</p> <p>Standards are set for student achievement in most of the arts disciplines, with appropriate assessment of student performance and achievement. Student results are used for improvement of instruction and learning. The program is evaluated regularly, and results are used for professional development and program improvement.</p> <p>Instruction includes some work in music, dance, theater, and the visual arts. It is sequential and includes creation, production, and performance in the arts, and historical and cultural context of the arts, artistic perception, and aesthetic valuing.</p> <p>The school and/or district provides high-quality professional development to those responsible for teaching in the arts. Administrative and financial support for arts education provides for appropriate time, space, equipment, materials, and instructional resources.</p> <p>Families are involved in the arts program as volunteers, and they receive training as needed. Partnerships are in place or being developed with the local arts community. Students have some opportunities to learn outside of as well as inside the school, including contact with the artists, performers, arts institutions and organizations, and works in the arts.</p>



Selected References

The publications data were supplied by the School Recognition Program Office in collaboration with CDE program offices. Questions about materials should be addressed to the CSRP office at 916-657-3810. Publications by the California Department of Education may be calling the Sales Office, CDE Press, at 916- 445-1260.

Arts Work: A Call for Arts Education for All California Students—The Report of the Superintendent's Task Force on the Visual and Performing Arts. 1997. Sacramento: California Department of Education.

California Commission on Teacher Credentialing and California Department of Education. 1997a. *California Standards for the Teaching Profession*. Sacramento: California Department of Education. 1997b. *Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for Beginning Teacher Support*. Sacramento: California Department of Education.

California's Healthy Start: Strong Families, Strong Communities for Student Success. 1998. Davis, CA: Healthy Start Field Office. (To obtain a copy, call Jeannie Jensen at 530-754-6343.)

California Instructional Clearinghouse. Database of information to assist with the selection of electronic materials; <http://clearinghouse.k12.ca.us>.

California Partnerships in Character Education. Sacramento County Office of Education; <http://www.clre.org/program/ce/ccephome.htm>.

California Technology Assistance Project. Assistant for the integration of curriculum and technology; <http://ctap.k12.ca.us/index1.html>.

The Chalkboard. Information on free corporate-sponsored educational projects, grants, scholarships, and services; <http://www.thechalkboard.com>.

Character Education Resources. California Department of Education; <http://www.cde.ca.gov/character/resources1.html>.

Check It Out! Assessing School Library/Media Programs. 1998. Sacramento: California Department of Education.

Classroom Connect. Resource that has a focus on telecommunications and the curriculum; <http://www.classroom.com/default.asp>.

Connect, Compute, and Compete: The Report of the California Education Technology Task Force. 1996. Sacramento: California Department of Education.

Continuity for Young Children: Positive Transitions to Elementary School. 1997. Sacramento: California Department of Education.

English-Language Arts Content Standards for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve. 1998. Sacramento: California Department of Education.

ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading, English, and Communication. Resource that includes publications, lesson plans, parent involvement materials; http://www.indiana.edu/~eric_rec/index.html

Family-School Compacts. 1997. Challenge Toolkit Series. Sacramento: California Department of Education.

First Class: A Guide for Early Primary Education. 1999. Sacramento: California Department of Education.

Fostering Resiliency in Kids: Protective Factors in the Family, School, and Community. 1991. Benard, Bonnie. Western Regional Center for Drug-Free Schools and Communities. San Francisco: West Ed.

From Risk to Resiliency: A Journey with Heart for Our Children, Our Future. 1994. Burns, E. Timothy. Dallas, TX: Marco Polo.

Gateway of Educational Materials. Educational resources on the Internet; <http://thegateway.org>.

Getting Results – Developing Safe and Healthy Kids. 1998. Sacramento: California Department of Education.

Guide and Criteria for Program Quality Review, Elementary Grades. 1998. Sacramento: California Department of Education.

History-Social Science Content Standards for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve. 1999. Sacramento: California Department of Education.

It's Elementary! 1992. Sacramento: California Department of Education.

Mathematics Content Standards for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve. 1998. Sacramento: California Department of Education.

Mathematics Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve. 1999, Sacramento: California Department of Education.

NSDC Standards for Staff Development, Elementary Level. 1995. Oxford, OH: National Staff Development Council. To obtain a copy, write to the National Staff Development Council, P.O. Box 240, Oxford, OH 45056 or telephone 800-727-7288. <http://www.nsdc.org>.

Physical Education Resources. California Department of Education; <http://www.cde.ca.gov/cilbranch/sca/pe/pe.html>.

Reading/Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve. 1999. Sacramento: California Department of Education.

Science Content Standards for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve. 1999. Sacramento: California Department of Education.

Service-Learning: Linking Classrooms and Communities: The Report of the Superintendent's Service-Learning Task Force. 1999. Sacramento: California Department of Education.

Student Success Teams: Supporting Teachers in General Education. 1997. Sacramento: California Department of Education.

Visual and Performing Arts Education. California Department of Education; <http://www.cde.gov/cilbranch/sca/arts>.

Visual and Performing Arts Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve, 1996. Sacramento: California Department of Education

Years of Promise: A Comprehensive Learning Strategy for America's Children. 1996. New York: Carnegie Corporation.